

# CAMP ROTARY

ELMORE COUNTY  
ALABAMA

---

MAINTAINED BY THE ROTARY CLUB OF MONTGOMERY  
FOR THE BOYS AND GIRLS OF THAT CITY.

---

## AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE BOOK

Issued by  
THE BOYS' WORK COMMITTEE  
and  
THE CAMP ROTARY COMMITTEE  
of  
MONTGOMERY ROTARY.

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Compiled by  
PETER A. BRANNON, *Chairman*  
Boys' Work Committee



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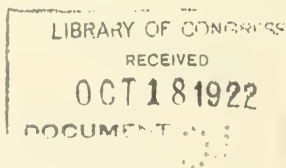
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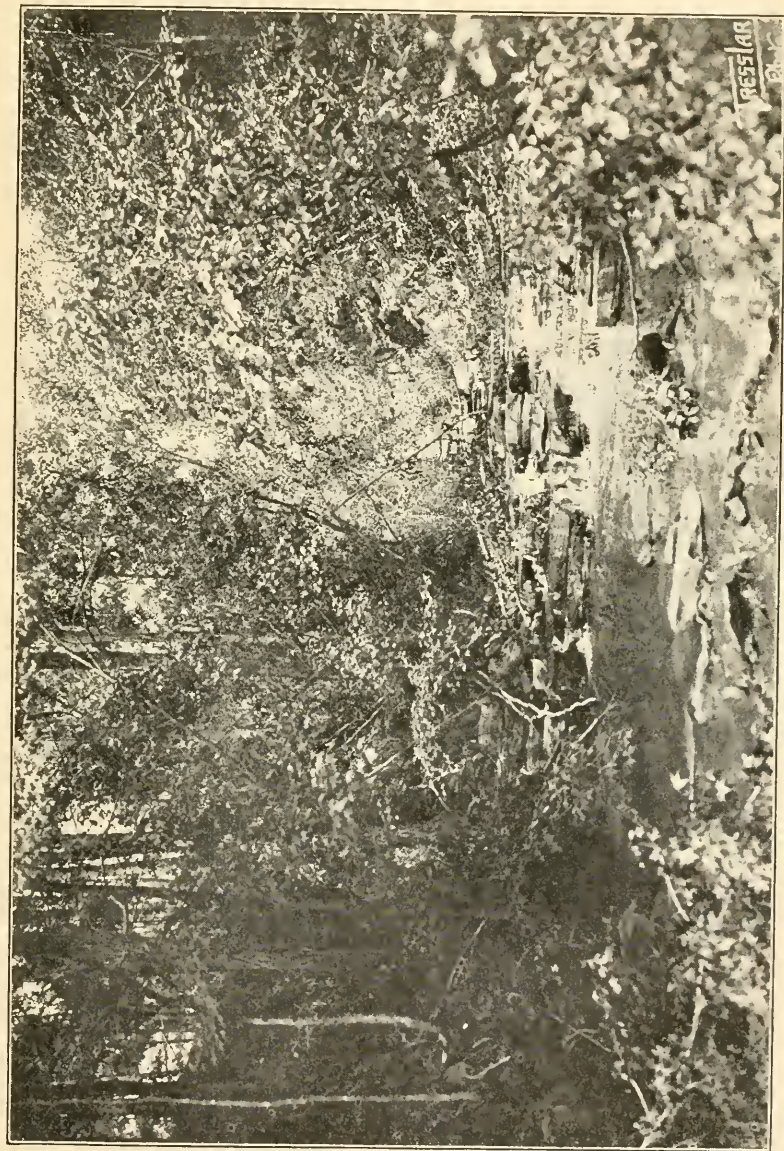
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The author has been assisted in the compilation of this booklet by several of the campers at the reservation. Most of the illustrations have been made by H. P. Tresslar, though James W. Kight furnished his pictures for such selections as have been made.

To Haygood Paterson I am indebted for assistance in identifying certain species of the plant life. To Mr. William Wood, and to my daughter, Carolyn Brannon, I am indebted for some bird records.

The Boy Scouts, the Y. M. C. A., and the Girl Scouts of Montgomery during their camping periods have lost no opportunity to make the attractiveness of the site all the more impressive and I have had presented to me in the compilation of this little volume numerous records and illustrations for the gift of which I take this opportunity to express my gratification. My fellow Committeemen have assisted in every possible manner, and to them my thanks are extended.





PASABULLUH CREEK—HARWELL MILL DAM SITE

This point just below the swimming pool, is where the old water mill stood for many years. The original land survey shows a "mill road" which follows the Indian trail from the Tallapoosa river to the east.



Y. M. C. A. BOYS IN CAMP, 1921.

This view shows the athletic field. One hundred yards to the rear of the large trees (center), is the dining hall, to the left under the hill the spring, to the right the pool. (View faces South.)



## THE LOCATION

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HE property is in the northeast quarter of the northwest quarter of sec. 33, T. 18, R. 19, on that forty known as the "Old Harwell Mill Forty." It is 15 miles, as the crow flies, due north of the City of Montgomery, and is reached over a rugged, picturesque, winding road of 18 miles. The highway has not approached within four miles of the site, but this is all the more desirable as otherwise the privacy of the camp would be effected and it was not intended that the place have any features of a country club. The roadway from the Montgomery to Birmingham Highway *via* Wetumpka, is good for slow traveling for cars all way into camp.

### ABORIGINAL HISTORY

The site is on the Indian trail from the "Falls of Wetumpka" to Coolome, which trail passes just below the forks of the Creek,  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile below the swimming pool. The trail led from the town of Odshiapofa, called by the traders "Hickory Ground," a compound word, signifying "Among the hickory trees." The village, located adjacent to the mound, and just inside the Rotary property, was a branch of this larger and later village.

William Bartram, the great American Naturalist, passed here in December, 1775, when he visited the Alibamo town of Taskigi at the forks of the Coosa and Tallapoosa. A village of great antiquity, known as Pakana, is shown on the DeCranay map of 1733. These facts will not only prove interesting, but show a romantic connection with the place.

Among early references to the locality is one found in the diary of Col. Benjamin Hawkins, at that time principal agent for Indian Affairs south of the Ohio, dated December 21, 1796, he says: "I set out for Coolome, the land variegated flat hilly and mountainous, pass in four miles Pasabulluh, a beautiful flat  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile, X a creek large and fine for a mill, at ten miles arrive at Coolome, leaving the White Ground to the right."

The Indian trail between Odshiapofa and Coolome followed the watershed to cross Pasabulluh Creek, thence up a table land  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile wide, to again enter the lower grounds of that stream which flows into the Tallapoosa River from the northeast below the old rifle range.

Indian towns generally give their name to the stream on which located, therefore, the aboriginal village adjacent to the mound on the property just outside the camp, was Pasabulluh, the name applying as well to the stream, called by them Pasabulluhatchee. (*hatche* being "creek.") So far as is known we have only this one reference to the point by name. Maps as early as 1735 show a town located opposite to the Yarbrough plantation, and on the present Gray Henderson property called Pakana.



BOATING ON THE SWIMMING POOL

## THE CAMP

The camp-site is in the northeast corner of the property immediately below the line, on a plateau overlooking Passabulluh Creek. It occupies three levels of an altitude considerably higher than the surrounding country and is drained by two streams.

The mess hall fronts the south, is a building of 100 feet by 60 feet under one roof, contains a dining room, the kitchen, an open pavillion at the end of which is a large fireplace made to accommodate six foot logs, and an office. It is screened throughout. It is so constructed that even during the winter season it is comfortable, but the sides of the dining room are all open except for intervening screens.

The spring furnishing the drinking water for the camp is two hundred feet west and one hundred feet below the kitchen. It is the same spring used by the original settler when he entered the land 91 years ago. A large terra cotta pipe has been sunk into the spring, the water flowing over this to empty into a small stream passing fifty feet west of, and below, the spring, and emptying into the larger creek  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile below. The water has been bacteriologically examined.

The tent quarters for campers are arranged in a large crescent, three hundred feet from end to end, just in the edge of a pine grove which skirts a slight decline off this upper plateau, and these quarters overlook a fifteen acre parade ground some 40 feet above the water's edge in the stream below. Just back of this pine grove in front of the dining hall, is a row of three large water oaks. All are handsome specimens of this tree but one is especially so. The old homestead faced south and these trees were planted prior to 1840 to shade the yard of the place.



The swimming pool is formed by an eight foot high dam thrown across the creek just in front of the camp site. This dam forms a pool from two to eight feet deep about 50 feet wide, 300 feet long. The water up stream for nearly a quarter of a mile is suitable for boating in light draught canoes. The pool is provided with spring boards, a diving platform, a diving tower, and ring swings. Water gates have been provided for the dam, and the water is let out of the pool periodically for the purpose of carrying away any excess of sand or trash which may have been washed in by the stream, though the water flows over the top of the dam at all times, thus producing fresh water. While the pool is largely in the shade, enough sunshine penetrates through the trees to sufficiently temper the water to make it as comfortable as flowing streams generally are.

The altitude as shown by the U. S. Geological survey is 500 feet. It occupies a pocket in the foothills which sufficiently protect it, thereby making it comfortable even for winter camping, while during the summer time it is fanned by the northern and western breezes to the extent that there is never an uncomfortable moment.

There are no mosquitoes.



GIRL SCOUTS IN CAMP, 1922.

Sixty Girl Scouts spent 2 weeks at Camp Rotary in July of this seasons. Since opened there have been more than 500 boys and girls camped at Rotary. Two weeks periods have been allowed the Boy Scouts, the Y. M. C. A., the Girl Scouts, and the under privileged boys of Montgomery.

### SUPERVISION

The direct control of the camp is vested in the "Camp Rotary Committee," who are designated by the legal transfer as *Trustees* of the property. This Committee, composed of Messrs Cramton, Douville, Marshuetz, May and Paterson, appointed by President Pepperman to effect the sale, was added to by President Paterson by the naming of Messrs. Bear and Loeb. President Jenkins named a new committee as follows: Cramton, Marshuetz, Paterson, (W. B.) Ray, Bear and Douville.

### HISTORY OF THE SITE

The north half of the northwest quarter of the section was patented by the U. S. Government, May 20, 1831, to Samuel Townsend. This date is prior to the Creek Land Cession of 1832, but as the location is south of the Indian Boundary line, made by the agreement of August 27, 1814, the government would patent direct to the settler rather than through the assignment to the Indian head of family. While there are no records to substantiate this fact, one John Townsend, an Englishman and Indian trader, was settled on the Tallapoosa River, only a few miles east of here, some years prior to 1700, and it is reasonable to assume him as an ancestor of this Samuel Townsend.

At a meeting of the club held May 4th, 1921, the Boys Work Committee by permission of President Maxie Pepperman, presented the proposition of buying a tract of land in Elmore County, which had been offered by the owner, Mr. D. T. Harwell, as a camp site for the boys of Montgomery. In less than 10 minutes, practically \$3,000 was subscribed and the purchase was immediately made of the already selected spot.

This sum was expended in the purchase of the land, the building of the dam, the construction of the roadway, the erection of the mess-hall the purchase of a range, cots, etc. The investment as it now stands is something less than \$3,500.

### SELECTION

Harry E. Hoppen, Scout Executive, member of the Club, being on the lookout for a camping place for his Boy Scouts, had the "old Harwell place" referred to him by Mr. George Graff, a traveling man of Montgomery. He immediately went there, was favorably impressed, and at once suggested the place to Fred Cramton, Lawrence Bear, and members of the Boys' Work Committee of Rotary. The eventual selection of the site, its improvement and its present superb condition, are largely due to the efforts of these two men—Mr. Cramton and Mr. Bear.

Mr. Hoppen carried his Boy Scouts to camp before even the dining hall was finished and these boys, together with the larger number of Y. M. C. A. campers who followed immediately behind them, cleared up the ground and did much to put in shape the condition of the place.

The Y. M. C. A. of Montgomery, through Secretary James Kight, has been liberal to a marked degree and has expended quite a sum in improving the road to Camp and adding other comfortable features.

### PLANT LIFE

The reserve is in the geographical center of the Eutaw Belt, of the Great Central Pine Belt, of the Coastal Plain of the state. It is more properly speaking in the short-leaf pine region. This tree dominates all over the reservation, but as two small streams flow entirely through the property, the course of vegetation peculiar to the rich



THE "GRAND CANYON"

This view shows the entrance to a series of ravines one fourth mile west of the camp-site. The many colored walls show a varied picture of rocky encrustations, and outcropping of iron and other minerals.

soil adjacent, is also to be found. Along the rocky banks of Passabulluh Creek grow handsome specimens of beech, birch, black gum, sweet gum, poplar, willow, bay, sycamore, and on the hillsides, the silver maple, dog wood, hickory, and the oaks assume interesting proportions.

Every tree credited by the Alabama Geological Survey to this region, grows within the camp, with the possible exception of the long

leaf pine. The cucumber tree (*magnolia virginiana*), not shown in their list is to be found here. The larger proportion of the growth on the property is evergreen.

While the early spring season is not propitious in this section for camping, the reservation is beautiful at this season of the year and its attractiveness is not exceeded by any section of the State. The flowering dogwood is found in practically every section of the locality, excepting of course that part formerly under cultivation. The *Cercis canadensis* or redbud is in quantities along the creek. The sweet



UNDER THE BIG WATER OAKS

These trees were set out here early in 1840. They all average more than four feet in diameter.

shrub, May apple, iris, and those flowering plants and shrubs peculiar to the sand country of the central part of the state are peculiarly attractive in this soil which is enriched by the phosphate salts which the marl rocks of the stream bed feeds to the soil.

The gums, oaks, beech, and elms, with their highly colored foliage, lend to the fall season the attractiveness which the flowers and the fresh green leaves give to the spring, but the dead of winter is hard-



ly less attractive for the short leaf pine, growing everywhere, is always green and the smilax of several varieties together with the bays and willows growing in the protected bottoms keep enough of the flora green to accentuate the beauty of the site.

The list of trees and larger shrubs positively indentify as growing within the property of the Rotary Club is:

Pinus palustris—Long leaf pine.	Nyssa uniflora—Tupelo gum.
Pinus taeda—Short leaf pine.	Diospyrus virginiana—Persimmon.
Pinus echinata—Short leaf pine.	Cercis canadensis—Red bud,
Pinus glabra—Spruce pine.	Sweet shrub.
Taxodium distichum—Cypress.	Smilax auriculata—Bamboo brier.
Juniperus virginiana—Cedar.	Smilax bona-nix—Bamboo brier.
Hicoria aquatica—Hickory.	Smilax lanceolata—Sweet scented smilax.
Hicoria alba—Hickory.	Azalea arborescens—Sweet Azalea.
Salix nigra—Willow.	Rhodendron catawbiense—Azalea.
Betula nigra—Birch.	Aesculus pavia—Buckeye.
Fagus grandifolia—Beech.	Prunus serotina—Wild cherry.
Quercus alba—White oak.	Prunus umbellata—Sloe.
Quercus stellata—Post oak.	Prunus angustifolia—Chickasaw plum.
Quercus marylandica—Black-jack oak.	Prunus americana—Red plum.
Quercus nigra—Water oak.	Crataegus (several varieties).
Quercus laurifolia—Water oak.	Gleditsia triacanthos—Honey locust.
Quercus phellos—Willow oak.	Carpinus caroliniana—Iron Wood.
Ulmus alata—Elm.	Celtis occidentalis—Hackberry.
Morus rubra—Mulberry.	Castanea pumila—Chinquapin.
Magnolia virginiana—Cucumber tree.	Ostrya virginiana—Hop hornbeam.
Magnolia glauca—Bay.	Kalmia latifolia—Mountain laurel.
Liriodendron tulipifera—Poplar.	(The nomenclature here used is that from Mohr's Plant Life of Alabama, 1901.)
Liquidambar styraciflua—Sweet gum.	
Sassafras variifolium—Sassafras	
Platanus occidentalis—Sycamore	
Ilex opaca—Holly.	
Acer saccharinum—Silver maple.	
Acer rubrum—Red maple.	
Cornus florida—Dogwood.	
Nyssa biflora—Blackgum.	

## FLOWERS

In the low crevices between the rock embankments on the sides of the stream, grows the *Sanguinaria canadensis*, blood root; *Podophyllum peltatum*, Mandrake; Azalea, erroneously locally called wild honeysuckle; several of the flag lillies; trumpet honeysuckle; as well as several species of wood violets. Higher up from the water's edge and on the more elevated places, the flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*), the Cercis, or redbud; the mountain laurel, the Virginia Creeper, and numerous ornamental shrubs and small trees grow prolifically. The wild hydrangea is in full bloom as late as the middle of July.



The character of the soil is such that those plants thriving best in a loose sandy soil, have a chance to perfect a growth which they could not in a more closely compact ground. The Azalea reaches 8 feet high on the banks of the swimming pool. Both varieties of the golden rod, numerous species of the *compositae* family, and two species of the sand cactus, grow here.

### HARDWOODS

Several varieties of the hickory nut family grow here, and there are one or two apparently escaped from cultivation walnuts. The American walnut, commonly called the black walnut, is found in a number of places over the site, and the scalybark hickory in several



THE CREEK

cases is found 75 to 100 feet high. On the west of the property are several hardwood trees.

### SOME NOTABLE TREES ON THE RESERVATION

The large water oaks shading the grounds in front of the mess hall are about 75 years old, having been planted at the time of the erection of the homestead of the original Mr. Harwell. The largest, more than 5 feet in diameter, and with a limb spread of considerably more than 100 feet circumference, is one of the handsomest water oaks in this central section of Alabama. These three trees occupy the brow of that little plateau overlooking the parade ground. Under this shade lie the remains of the original members of the old family, early settled here. A few specimens of small long leaf pine trees only a few years old, are found. However, there are quite a few large *short leaf* pines, probably three or four thousand young specimens of this variety.

Two very attractive cedars of those originally growing here are to be seen in the upper camp grounds and across the creek are quite a number of smaller specimens. These two large trees appear to be about one hundred years old.

Several specimens of the pride of China, that is the imported china-berry, are found to the right of the old house site. These trees are not native, but are common to all old resident sites throughout the State.

The beech along the stream west of the swimming pool and the ironwood trees further down, are typical of rich bottoms, in this climate.



THE POOL.

One cucumber tree, that very interesting member of the magnolia family, is found shading the spring, which supplies the drinking water.

#### BIRD LIFE

The site is in the Lower Austrial Faunal Life Zone of America, and the distribution of birds and mammals is aptly peculiar to that region. Because of the diversity of conditions on and immediately surrounding the locality, bird life is all the more attractive.

The remoteness of the place from the thickly settled sections, and at the same time the proximity to the homes of the small farms, which are to the south and east of the locality, attracts those who frequent the swamps and more dense growths, as well as those birds who court the society of man. Within the property lines are sections of open cultivated country (that is, it was formerly under cultivation, prior to the present ownership), some swamp country, and

much of a rocky, hilly, rolling nature. On the western line the ravine, locally known as "the canyon," presents a section attractive to such birds as the swallows.

When camping here one is immediately attracted with a peculiar feature. The house wrens use the tent ropes with a freedom not characterized, and it is no uncommon thing to see several around the tents all day. During the entire summer camping period the Chuck-Wills-Widow is heard from early sun-down to day-break the next morning. The conditions are propitious for its nesting here, and no doubt they are breeding on the site. There is a record of the Whip-Poor-Will, but as it is of a July date, I cannot positively vouch for this. I have, however, recorded the bull-bat here on July 8.

The large number of pines surrounding the camp site attract a number of birds which frequent these trees, notably: certain of the warblers, the nuthatch, the sapsucker, the little wood-pecker, and I have a record of redeyed vireo of a July date. So far as official records go, the robin did not nest in Montgomery County, until the Spring of 1921. On the morning of July 9, 1922, I observed the female at my tent flap, therefore, I presume the bird undoubtedly nested here during the present season.

The kingfisher frequents the little stream south of the swimming pool, but as it is not large enough for fish of any appreciable size, I see no other reason than for the purpose of nesting in the rugged rock crevices overlooking it. The volume of water flowing down the stream is not very considerable, though as early as 1796, a traveler makes the statement that it was large enough for a mill.

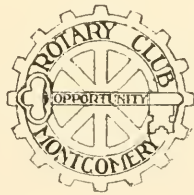
Of course there are not situations applicable for the nesting of water birds, as there is no swamp country except some low ground near the lower end of the property, but even here, the bed of the stream is of yellow gravel and sand, and the banks are lined with a heavy growth of alder. There are no sloughs or swamp grasses which would be suitable for snipe, woodcock, and such birds as these.

The birds already identified and recorded during the past two seasons, occurring here are:

Cardinal.....	Cardinalis cardinalis cardinalis
Bluejay.....	Cyanocitta cristata florincola
Bluebird.....	Sialia sialis sialis
Summer Tanager.....	Piranga rubra rubra
Redeyed Vireo.....	Vireosylva olivacea
Chuck-Wills-Widow.....	Antrostomus carolinensis
Brownheaded Nuthatch.....	Sitta pusilla.
Guinea Sapsucker.....	Dryobates pubescens pubescens.
Downy Woodpecker.....	Dryobates pubescens medianus
Meadowlark.....	Sturnella magna magna.
Wood thrush.....	Hylocichla mustelina.
House Wren.....	Troglodytes aedon aedon.
Bull-Bat.....	Chordeiles virginianus virginianus.
Whip-Poor-Will.....	Antrostomus vociferus vociferus
Barred Owl.....	Strix varia varia
Screech Owl.....	Otus asio asio.
Kingfisher.....	Ceryle alcyon.

Quail (Bob White).....	Colinus virginianus virginianus
Mourning Dove.....	Zenaidura macroura carolinensis.
Phoebe.....	Sayoris phoebe
Mocking Bird.....	Mimus polyglottos polyglottos.
Myrtle Warbler.....	Dendroica coronata.
Field Sparrow.....	Spizella pusilla pusilla
Grasshopper Sparrow.....	Ammodramus savannarum australis.
Redheaded Woodpecker.....	Melanerpes erythrocephalus.
Cuckoo.....	Coccyzus americanus americanus.
Veery.....	Hylocichla fuscescens fuscescens
Chimney Swift.....	Chaetura pelagica
Pine Warbler.....	Dendroica vigorsii vigorsii
Robin.....	Planesticus migratorius migratorius.

These records are for the camping season and do not apply for the entire year as no doubt many immigrants are here during the winter months when the camp is closed.



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